

## Just another trip by Brian White

It's been a year since Sue has passed and so without her to crack the whip I was late dropping the mooring lines and departing for an overnighter in Opunga Cove ... Out of the marina and head up wind to raise the main. Peel away to go out to sea unfurling the jib and settling down to an afternoon run in the moderate breeze to round Cocked Hat Island and head to Kent Passage. There are three rocks just off the end of the reef on a straight line to Kent so a little shift seaward to make sure of clearing them and across to Kent in Golden Delicious on a broad reach.

The sun was shining and the wind about 12 knots so what more could I ask for. If only Sue was sitting beside me.

Kent Passage is shallow its prudent to keep to the center but a few birds working a Kahawai school distracted me enough to quickly put a lure out in the hope of fresh fish for bait later in the evening. Alas it was not so attention switched to sailing and avoiding the rocks off the Western side of the passage.

As I cleared Kent the chop increased, and the wind shifted to become a tight reach which GD loves, and we romped along barely touching the helm and sitting at a healthy 6 knots. Tapeka Point beckoned in the distance, and we romped across the bay throwing spray across the deck and even daring to wet my face. I eased the traveler just a touch and she stood up a fraction cause that's what she likes, and she responded by charging across the bay.

Off Tapeka it became a little choppier as is usual, but nothing to be concerned about. Have to make sure we set a course to avoid Capstan Rock since although I have never seen it, I know it's there lurking just under the surface ready to tear the keel off.

Not so long ago Sue and I were fishing just off Capstan and pulled in a plus 20lb Snapper. The fact that it was the start of a weeklong cruise presented us with a problem as what to do with it. A quick call to Keith Turner solved the problem as he kindly put it into his big freezer for us. What else are friends for.

As we charged along the breeze tightened and became almost a beat. There is nothing quite like a good thrash to windward is the saying and in this case, it was very true. With the mainsheet in my lap ready to ease in the gusts we did thrash along towards Opunga. This lifted my earlier gloom and cleansed my mind. This is why we go sailing!

Just outside Opunga I headed into the wind and furled the jib, dropped the main into the lazy jacks and started the motor.

The control for the anchor winch is in the cockpit but the anchor has a tendency to stick in the fair lead, so I ease the chain just a little and the motion of the boat usually allows the anchor, to hang slightly down ready for dropping. Of course, in previous times I had a crewmate to worry about dropping the pick but now I have to make sure I am not racing along the deck at the last minute to clear the jam.

Nobody is in my special spot at the Eastern end of the bay, so I headed in, rounded up and set the pick.

Only have to tidy up the main and put the billy on for a cuppa.

If only Sue was here.